

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EUR-12 IO-13 HA-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00
PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01
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FM AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN
TO SECSTATE WASHEC 7585
INFO AMCONSUL DURBAN
AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 1 OF 2 CAPE TOWN 1421

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: SOCI, SHUM, SF
SUBJ: CROSSROADS. IS THE END NEAR?

REF: A. PRETORIA 4760; B. PRETORIA 4915; C. CAPE TOWN A-45

SUMMARY: THIS MESSAGE REPORTS RECENT GOVT MOVES
AGAINST CROSSROADS AND ITS SUPPORTERS. RECENT MINISTERIAL
STATEMENTS SHOW THAT SAG REMAINS FIRMLY COMMITTED TO
DEMOLITION OF THE SQUATTER CAMP IN THE NEAR FUTURE. END
SUMMARY.

1. RECENT STRONG RUMORS THAT DEMOLITION OF CROSSROADS WAS
IMMINENT (REFTEL A) WERE APPARENTLY STIMULATED BY WRITTEN
NOTICES TO MOVE SERVED ON APPROXIMATELY 100 CROSSROADS
FAMILIES EARLY LAST WEEK BY PAB, THE PENINSULA ADMINISTRATION
BOARD (A BADLY NAMED AUTHORITY, RESPONSIBLE ONLY FOR AFRICAN
AREAS OF THE PENINSULA). PAB ORDERED CROSSROADS FAMILIES
LIVING IN THE CAPE LEGALLY TO DISMANTLE THEIR "PONDOKS" AND
MOVE TO THE EMERGENCY KTC SQUATTER CAMP ONE-HALF MILE AWAY
IN NYANGA TOWNSHIP. EFFORT TO GET LEGAL RESIDENTS OUT OF
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THE CAMP WAS SEEN BY PANICKY CROSSROADS RESIDENTS AND SUPPORTERS
AS HARBINGER OF CAMP'S DESTRUCTION. PAB PROMPTLY DENIED RUMORS,
BUT REFUSED TO INDICATE WHEN DESTRUCTION WOULD OCCUR.

2. IN TEN DAYS SINCE NOTICES WERE SERVED, FEW IF ANY LEGAL
RESIDENTS HAVE LEFT CROSSROADS FOR KTC. SOME APPARENTLY ARE LOATHE
TO DO SO BECAUSE THEY OR THEIR WIVES HAVE BEEN PUT OUT OF KTC

PREVIOUSLY. OTHERS FEEL COMMITTED TO CROSSROADS COMMUNITY.

3. FAILURE OF LEGAL FAMILIES TO MOVE HAS LED TO PAB CHARGES THAT CROSSROADS RESIDENTS HAVE STARTED CAMPAIGN TO INTIMIDATE FAMILIES WHO WANT TO TAKE UP PAB OFFER OF ACCOMMODATIONS IN KTC CAMP. RIOT POLICE WERE SENT TO CROSSROADS ON FRIDAY, AUGUST 18, REPORTEDLY BECAUSE A MOB WAS PREPARING TO ASSAULT LEGAL RESIDENTS TRYING TO LEAVE THE CAMP. CROSSROADS COMMITTEE HAS DENIED ANY INTIMIDATION HAS TAKEN PLACE, AND SAYS IT WOULD NOT INTERFERE WITH ANYONE WISHING TO LEAVE.

4. MEANWHILE, AUTHORITIES APPEAR TO BE ENGAGING IN SOME INTIMIDATION OF THEIR OWN. THE CHIEF COMMISSIONER FOR WESTERN CAPE WARNED THAT CROSSROADS MEN EMPLOYED LEGALLY IN THE CAPE BUT WHO BROUGHT THEIR WIVES HERE COULD BE FIRED. AND, TWO CATHOLIC CLERICS WHO ADDRESSED CROSSROADS DAY OF PRAYER JULY 30 WERE INFORMED BY POLICE AUGUST 16 THAT THEY COULD EXPECT TO BE CHARGED UNDER RIOTOUS ASSEMBLY ACT, BECAUSE THE MEETING WAS ILLEGAL (REFAIR). ONE OF THOSE PRIESTS, BISHOP ERNEST GREEN, WAS TOLD BY POLICE THAT ALL THE SPEAKERS WHO TOOK PART IN DAY OF PRAYER (INCLUDING REV. SAM BUTI, PRESIDENT OF SOUTH AFRICAN COUNCIL OF CHURCHES, AND REV. ABEL HENDRICKS, PRESIDENT OF METHODIST CONFERENCE) WOULD BE PROSECUTED.

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5. THIS DEVELOPMENT GENERATED STRONG EXPRESSIONS OF SUPPORT FOR THREATENED CLERICS. IN ROME, CARDINAL MCCANN ISSUED STATEMENT DESCRIBING POLICE THREATS TO PROSECUTE AS "OUTRAGEOUS," AND STRESSED THAT BISHOP GREEN WAS AT CROSSROADS PRAYER DAY REPRESENTING HIM. MP ALEX BORAINÉ SAID THAT IF CLERICS TRULY WERE TO BE CHARGED, HE CONSIDERED IT AN ACT OF INCREDIBLE STUPIDITY. APPARENTLY SOME HIGHER AUTHORITY AGREED WITH BORAINÉ, FOR THERE HAVE BEEN NO SUBSEQUENT MOVES TO PROSECURE DAY OF PRAYER SPEAKERS.

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6. LAST WEEK ALSO, CAPE TOWN MAYOR TED MAUERBERGER AND EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF CITY COUNCIL APPEALED TO GOVT THAT CROSSROADS RESIDENTS NOT BE UPROOTED UNTIL SUITABLE ALTERNATIVE ACCOMMODATION WAS PROVIDED. BRIGADIER VAN DER WESTHUIZEN, CHAIRMAN OF THE PAB, IN A LENGTHY STATEMENT VIROROUSLY REJECTED MAYOR'S APPEAL, SAYING THAT IT WAS NECESSARY TO ASK JUST WHERE THE ALTERNATIVE ACCOMMODATION SHOULD BE. "MUST IT BE IN THE PENINSULA? WOULD THAT NOT ENCOURAGE MILLIONS (SIC) OF OTHERS TO CONVERGE ON THE AREA AND SQUAT?" THE BRIGADIER LASHED OUT AT THE MAYOR FOR LOSING SIGHT OF THE LAW, AND CLOSED HIS CASE WITH QUOTE FROM ROMANS, CHAPTER 13: "THE EXISTING AUTHORITIES HAVE BEEN PUT THERE BY GOD. WHOEVER OPPOSES THE EXISTING AUTHORITY, OPPOSES WHAT GOD HAS ORDERED."

7. SOMEWHAT MORE SOPHISTICATED BUT EQUALLY TOUGH, UNEQUIVOCAL OFFICIAL STAND AGAINST CROSSROADS EMERGED THIS WEEK FROM CAPE PROVINCE NATIONALIST PARTY CONGRESS (SEPTTEL). BOTH MINISTER OF DEFENSE BOTHA (REFTEL B) AND PLURAL RELATIONS MINISTER MULDER LEFT NO DOUBT THAT CROSSROADS WILL NOT BE TOLERATED MUCH LONGER. ACCORDING TO MULDER, "... NO LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PRESSURE FROM ANYWHERE IN THE WORLD CAN MOVE US.... THOSE THERE ILLEGALLY... WILL BE REMOVED, IRRESPECTIVE OF THE POISON THAT WILL BE SUCKED FROM OUR DETERMINATION."

8. IF EVER IN DOUBT, CROSSROADS RESIDENTS AND SUPPORTERS NOW ARE ABSOLUTELY CERTAIN WHERE THEY STAND. ONLY REMAINING QUESTIONS ARE JUST WHEN CROSSROADS WILL BECOME THE NEXT VICTIM OF SAG KRAGDADIGHEID, WHETHER RESIDENT RESISTANCE WILL LEAD TO VIOLENCE, AND WHERE CROSSROADS RESIDENTS CAN GO.

9. CONSENSUS HERE NOW IS THT SOMETIME IN SEPTEMBER OR OCTOBER, WHEN GOOD WEATHER SEEMS PERMANENT, THE FRONT END LOADERS WILL MOVE IN. AND, SINCE CROSSROADS IS GEOGRAPHICALLY EASY TO SEAL OFF FROM REST OF CAPE FLATS IF NECESSARY, ANY TROUBLE WILL PROBABLY BE CONTAINED.

10. ACCORDING TO FATHER DESMOND CURRAN, CATHOLIC PASTOR OF CROSSROADS, PLANS HAVE BEEN MADE TO PUT UP SMALL CHILDREN TEMPORARILY WITH FAMILIES IN AFRICAN TOWNSHIPS. HOWEVER, NEW LAWS WILL MAKE IT DIFFICULT FOR SYMPATHIZERS TO OFFER LEVEL OF INTERIM ACCOMMODATION OFFERED TO VICTIMS OF PAST SQUATTER CAMP DEMOLITIONS. DUE TO LEGAL RESTRICTIONS, FOR EXAMPLE, CAPE FLATS COMMITTEE FOR INTERIM ACCOMMODATION HAS BEEN DISBANDED, AND CELESTE SANTOS' GROUP NOW WORKS UNDER RELATIVELY SAFER SPONSORSHIP OF WESTERN PROVINCE CUNCIL OF CHURCHES.

11. A FEW HUNDRED CROSSROADS RESIDENTS MAY FIND NEW "TEMPORARY" HOUSING AT KTC CAMP. IF PAST EXPERIENCE IS ANY GUIDE, A FEW THOUSAND, AT BEST, WILL ACCEPT TRANSPORTATION BACK TO THE HOMELANDS. BUT FOR MOST, THIS WILL NOT BE AN ATTRACTIVE ALTERNATIVE SINCE, ACCORDING TO A RECENT UCT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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SURVEY, THE AVERAGE CROSSROADS MALE HAS BEEN LIVING IN CAPE TOWN FOR 18 YEARS, AND HIS WIFE FOR ELEVEN YEARS. SOME 90 PERCENT OF HEADS OF HOUSEHOLD ARE REPORTEDLY EMPLOYED. THE VAST MAJORITY OF THE 20,000 DISPLACED CROSSROADS RESIDENTS WILL, THEREFORE, IN ALL PROBABILITY TRY TO FIND SOMEWHERE ELSE TO LIVE NEARBY.
AHLGREN

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